



## Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

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### Announcements

We're planning an informal "show & tell" (or just "show" for the shy) of member's garden successes, special projects, or unique features. Take a few pictures to share and contact Gigi Siekkinen, Program Chair, (gigi.siekkinen@frontier.net) for details.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to W.O. member Vicki Bonk and family! Their prairie woodland garden with pond is one of the "Beautiful Garden" winners announced by the Minneapolis Star Tribune. It'll be featured in an upcoming issue of the Home and Garden. Vicki was one of the founding forces behind the Nokomis Community Center naturescape garden and a continuing supporter of it.

**Current officer's terms expire** in December. If you're interested in joining our fun committee & quarterly meetings, contact Marty...before she calls you!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to W.O. member Rebecca Chesin for receiving an Environmental Champion award by the City of Plymouth. Rebecca's 8,000 sq. ft. front yard is almost 100% planted in natives and she has been involved in several City events to promote the use of native plantings.

### Upcoming Events

#### Hands-On Native Plant Care

Tuesday, August 3, from 6:30 pm

Tuesday, August 17, from 6:30 pm

Tuesday, Sept. 7, from 6:30 pm

#### Nokomis Community Center

Meet at the Hillside garden east of Nokomis Community Center at **50th St & E. Nokomis Pkwy.**, from 6:30 pm, on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from May-Sept. A great opportunity to learn about native plants, and weeds too. Share info with other 'native' gardeners, and contribute to the beauty of the park! Bring gloves, bug spray, a weeding tool or trowel, water and a hat. Come learn what's worth saving and what isn't.

#### Go Wild Native Landscaping Conference

August 6 & 8; Madison, WI

Wild Ones celebrates their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with sessions on Gardens, How-tos, Critters, and more. See <http://gowild-madison.org> for details.

#### Seed Collecting & Storing

Tuesday, Sept. 21, from 6:30 pm  
Nokomis Community Center

How do you know when seeds are ripe for collecting? What's the best way to store them? Join us as Rebecca Chesin, a Wild Ones member and Master Gardener shares tips on gathering seeds and keeping them for use in the next growing season.

#### Maximizing Your Property's Assets

Tuesday, Oct. 19, from 6:30 pm  
Nokomis Community Center

Most of us have at least one area of our property that we consider to be a

challenge. Ann Mueller will talk about how to work with your site's conditions rather than fighting them. Ann's business, Go Native, is a landscape company focusing on native plants.

Our monthly meetings are held at the **Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy., Minneapolis.** Doors open at 6:30 pm for socializing and setup, meetings start at 7:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Exceptions to this schedule are March (when we sponsor the Native Plant Expo) and December (no meeting).

Unless otherwise noted, programs are free and open to the public. Check [www.wild.org/chapters/twincities](http://www.wild.org/chapters/twincities) for updates.

### 2004 Summer Tour Colorful & Varied

Weather for the July tour of native gardens in the Longfellow / Seward neighborhoods was wonderful, as were the gardens. A total of 31 (!) gardens were on exhibit, offering a marvelous variety of native plants and garden ideas: a large native garden in front with a vegetable garden in back big enough to feed a family for the summer, a front yard garden of 5 different native grasses, an excavated hollow lined with native plants to catch rain off the roof, rain barrels, and lots more. The tour was jointly sponsored by the Longfellow and Seward neighborhoods and Wild Ones. Many of the gardens on display were recipients of the neighborhood matching grant program.

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Twin Cities Chapter of The Wild Ones

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### Message from the President

#### Who Are We and What Do We Believe by Marty Rice

During the four years of our chapter's history we have occasionally received some questions about who we support and why. For instance, should we take up an offer by one of our big traditional nursery/landscaper firms to hold our meetings on their premises? After all, we are considering bigger meeting quarters. Should we sell garden books by local authors who are outstanding horticulturists or landscapers but whose books don't focus primarily on native plants? We have declined these offers in the past based in part on the Wild Ones Mission statement which states:

Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to encourage

biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit, environmental, educational and advocacy organization.

This distinguishes us from most every other garden organization in that we encourage gardening with native plants and moving away from the use of chemicals, watering, mowing and other practices commonly used by traditional garden groups. People come to Wild Ones to learn more about environmentally friendly gardening—about plants native to our habitat—plants that have survived the vicissitudes of the climate without the help of artificial means. We tell stories of butterflies, birds and other wildlife

which do not survive as well in the more common gardens and lawns filled with hybrid flowers and plants.

Most of us in Wild Ones are not native plant purists. Many are in the early stages of learning about these native plants and are wondering how they might fit into our gardens. Others are farther along and want to know more and/or sharing that information with others. Since we strive to be a source of information and inspiration on native plant gardening regardless of your level of expertise, we feel it's contrary to our goal to support others whose primary focus is not on native plants and environmentally-friendly landscaping practices.

### 2004 Spring Tour Wet & Wonderful

Pouring rain and bitter cold couldn't dampen the beauty of the gardens featured on our Spring Woodland Garden Tour. Monica Angle designed her delightful garden, located in Minneapolis, as a series of outdoor rooms filled with native wildflowers and grasses and framed by native trees, shrubs and structural elements. Woodland wildflowers in Mary Miller's front-yard garden, also in Minneapolis, were in peak bloom on the day of the tour and glistened magically in the rain. Visitors to Dianne Plunkett Latham's Edina garden were treated to a dazzling display of native lady's slippers. Finally, Wild Ones member Arden Aarstad showed tour-goers his spacious Edina sanctuary, which includes native wildflowers and shrubs and intriguing water features that attract birds. Thank-you Monica, Mary, Dianne and Arden, for sharing your lovely gardens!

### To-Do List for Gardeners August – September – October

- Stay on top of weeding; just a few minutes a day (depending on the size of your garden) can catch them before they go to seed.
- Water newly planted additions to your garden during drier periods.
- Replenish mulch, as needed (2-4 inches).
- If you plan to gather seeds to share with others or start more plants for yourself, watch seed heads for readiness to harvest. (*Come to our Sept. meeting to learn more.*)
- Clip seed heads before they ripen of plants that are too "exuberant" in your garden.
- The cooler temperatures of autumn are a great time to add plants. Keep watered to help them establish well before winter.
- Take pictures (and notes) to aid in winter planning for next year—and for our upcoming "show and tell". (*See Announcements.*)
- Consider doing your garden cleanup in the spring; standing plants bring winter interest to your yard and continue to provide shelter and food to wildlife.
- Determine where you might want to expand your garden and smother the grass with newspaper/cardboard and mulch. By spring, the area will be ready for planting (or winter sow some of your collected seeds).
- Don't forget to take time and enjoy the wildlife that makes use of your native plants.

*This list was compiled by Rebecca Chesin, with some help from the fine folks on the Native Plants forum at [www.gardenweb.com](http://www.gardenweb.com).*



## Monarchs in Mexico by Kris Martinka

This year I'm planning to plant lots of milkweed and asters, goldenrod, liatris, coreopsis, and other fall-blooming natives. My inspiration for this activity comes from a trip my husband and I took in February to explore the over wintering site in Mexico of millions of monarch butterflies. It is a trip well worth taking, but it is not for the faint of heart or the physically out of shape.

Our visit began with a flight from Minneapolis to Leon, followed by a bus ride to Morelia in the state of Michoacan in central Mexico. At Hotel Soledad we signed up for a tour leaving the next morning to one of the two sanctuaries open to the public, Cerro Chinchua. Six Minnesotans were among the group of ten seekers who traveled by minivan to the sanctuary. At first we made good time on the freeway passing through varying terrain for several hours before beginning the winding trip up narrower roads through mountain villages to finally reach the trailhead. Entrepreneurial Mexicans helped us onto horses and led us up a rocky wooded trail for about 45 minutes, hurrying the horses along so that they could go back to pick us their next set of fares. When the trail became too steep for novice riders, we slid off the horses, and the journey continued on foot over a mountain hillside forested with pines and firs.

After a strenuous hike of about half an hour, we began seeing a few lifeless-looking monarchs on the sides of the path. Our English-speaking guide warned us to avoid stepping on them, since they are alive but in a dormant state. In one area the ground was thick with butterflies as a result of a recent windstorm which had blown them out of the trees. Cool cloudy weather had prevented the cold-blooded butterflies from warming up enough to return to their roosts. Avoiding that area we continued until we came to a place where the butterflies were clinging in huge clumps to the trees. It was a

relatively cloudy day, and only a small number of butterflies were in flight. On sunny days hundreds of monarchs can be seen fluttering through the air.

Along the hike back we met throngs of Mexican school children on field trips to the sanctuary and hoped that their eager feet would not trample too many of the hapless butterflies on the ground. We were comforted by the fact that five of the seven over wintering areas are closed to the public and protected from development. At the end of the hiking trail the same two Mexicans who had led us on the trip up rushed over to us, anxious to claim us as their passengers for the trip back.

It has been only since 1975 that the destination of the monarchs' fall migration has been known to people other than the natives of the area. Research shows that monarchs from Canada and the US east of the Rockies travel up to 3,000 miles at about fifty miles a day to reach their winter resting place in the oyamel fir forests at close to 10,000 feet of elevation in the Trans-Volcanic mountains. This is a very specific habitat, where the temperature is close to freezing, preventing the monarchs from metabolizing too much of their stored fat. They roost on the southwest slopes of the mountains where trees and underbrush provide shelter, and fog and clouds provide necessary moisture along with nearby water. From November to March they await the return of spring and the growth of the milkweeds critical for the development of the next generation. After producing their offspring, they die after a life of about eight or nine months.

The new generation migrates northward. The monarchs that reach our area have never been in the Trans-Volcanic mountains. Three or four generations may be produced over the summer, with these butterflies living about three to five weeks. The last generation stores up energy for the long journey south by feeding on fall-blooming flowers. Day length and temperature around the end of August in Minnesota signal the butterflies

to prepare for migration and change the bodies of this generation, preventing these monarchs from reaching sexual maturity and mating until the next spring. It seems miraculous that these monarchs return to the very same areas that their great-great grandparents left in the spring, where they wait through the winter months to start the next generation on its way.

The thrill of seeing the monarchs and the thought of these delightful butterflies undertaking such a long journey make me want to do whatever I can to support this marvelous cycle.

Author's note: Two great websites to learn more about monarchs to which I am indebted for some of the information in this article are [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org) and [www.snm.org/sln/monarchs](http://www.snm.org/sln/monarchs).



*The cooler temperatures of autumn are ideal for adding natives to your garden. Many nurseries will be holding sales as we near the end of the gardening season, making it even more affordable to add native plants that will attract and support butterflies in your garden.*

*Do you have a story or experience you'd like to share with your fellow Wild Ones? Send your write-up (any length is okay) to Newsletter Editor Rebecca Chesin, 763-694-9989, [spiralenso@yahoo.com](mailto:spiralenso@yahoo.com).*

## E-Newsletter?

Our committee is looking into offering an electronic version of our newsletter, and we wish to poll our member's interest in supporting this. As Wild Ones, we help protect our area's biodiversity through the use of native plants. We can further protect our natural resources by choosing to receive an e-newsletter instead of a dead-tree hardcopy. If we offered both to members, would you be willing to switch to the online version? Send comments to Marty Rice at [jermfr@msn.com](mailto:jermfr@msn.com).

## Membership Benefits To You

- Monthly meetings featuring excellent presentation on a wide array of native landscaping topics.
- Receive the new member packet, including the New Member Handbook full of information and activities on natural landscaping.
- Receive the Wild Ones journal from the National Office. It contains articles and information that will inspire and educate you about natural landscaping.
- Free admission to Wild Ones' events, such as our Native Plant Expo, garden tours, and native plant walks and swaps. Reciprocity with other chapters' meetings.
- Gather and exchange information and expertise with like-minded persons.
- Your very valuable support for the Wild One's Mission.

## Join or Renew

- Sign up at a meetings, or
- Call Marty Rice at 952-927-6531, or
- Access the national website at [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org)

## Our Mission

Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.



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[www.for-wild.org/chapters.html](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters.html)

## Upcoming In a Future Issue:

- More native gardeners' To-Dos as we "batten down the hatches" in preparation for our zone 4 winter.
- More public native plantings to visit in the Twin Cities' area.
- More information about our upcoming website and e-newsletter. (See box on pg 3)